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Comprehensive dialogue with six United Nations agencies and funds

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United Nations Development Programme**

Summary

The present report highlights United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) initiatives and activities undertaken in 2008 concerning indigenous peoples, with a special focus on themes and programmes. UNDP engagement with indigenous peoples has received a fresh impetus with the historic adoption on 13 September 2007 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (General Assembly resolution 61/295, annex).

Previously, UNDP initiatives in this area, such as the Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme and the UNDP-Global Environmental Facility (GEF) Community-Based Adaptation project, have integrated indigenous peoples issues into their efforts based on past recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The UNDP *Human Development Report 2007/2008* recommends that, in addressing climate change, governance structures for overseeing shared goals have to extend beyond conservation and emissions targets to environmental and human development concerns, including respect for the human rights of indigenous peoples. Since issuance of the report, the UNDP Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development in Asia and the Pacific has organized global, regional and community dialogues in 2008.

* E/C.19/2009/1.

** Submission of the present report was delayed in order to ensure the inclusion of the most recent information.

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In 2008, UNDP continued to support the establishment of participatory mechanisms for indigenous peoples, such as the GEF Small Grants Programme and the Indigenous Peoples Advisory Council to the United Nations country team in Bolivia. UNDP is collaborating closely with the United Nations system through the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues and the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Indigenous Issues to mainstream indigenous peoples issues in mechanisms and processes at the country level. UNDP welcomes the guidance of the Permanent Forum, particularly regarding its contribution towards the full realization of the provisions of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in accordance with articles 41 and 42, thereof.

As follow-up to the recommendations of the Permanent Forum, UNDP has established an internal liaison committee to coordinate and maximize efforts in the area of indigenous peoples issues. The new UNDP civil society strategy highlights the important role that UNDP will play in improving participation of groups facing marginalization and exclusion. In this context, UNDP will continue joining forces with other actors and partners to promote the rights of indigenous peoples in the coming years.

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the recommendations made by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at its seventh session and at previous sessions. It also provides details of activities, projects and programmes undertaken by UNDP over the past years and in 2008 that are relevant to the work of the Permanent Forum. The report does not aim to provide an exhaustive and complete account of initiatives happening in all countries where UNDP is present, but rather to present an overview that exemplifies the continuous commitment of UNDP to indigenous peoples rights and human development.

2. In April 2008, the Bureau of the Permanent Forum met with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, the Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and other UNDP staff members. The discussions focused on how to strengthen the collaboration between UNDP, indigenous peoples and the Permanent Forum. In its 2008 report, the Permanent Forum urged UNDP to strengthen its institutional capacity on indigenous peoples issues by establishing a task force to serve as a liaison mechanism between headquarters and focal points on indigenous issues at the country level. Furthermore, the Forum recommended that those focal points be specialists on indigenous peoples issues (E/2008/43, para. 67).

3. In response, within UNDP, the Partnerships Bureau has established the Indigenous Peoples-UNDP Liaison Committee based at Headquarters in New York and composed of designated focal points from each UNDP practice, regional and substantive bureau. The Liaison Committee will maximize and systematize current efforts to partner with indigenous peoples and provide corporate direction. The Committee will also ensure linkages and provide support to ongoing initiatives, such as the Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development in Asia and the Pacific and a new regional initiative of engagement with indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, a major component of the UNDP Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme. The regional initiative will begin in March 2009 and will serve to establish national processes of dialogue with indigenous peoples and Governments to jointly identify strategies towards the effective implementation of the principles contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

4. The UNDP strategic plan 2008-2011 emphasizes the link between human development, human rights and national ownership by calling for UNDP to support Governments in the identification of effective interventions strengthening participation by the poorest social sectors, as well as by women, youth, persons living with disabilities and indigenous peoples. Support to mobilize civic engagement among those groups is a basic foundation for strengthening their access to the policymaking process. On the occasion of the 2008 International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, the UNDP Administrator reaffirmed that UNDP would continue to support efforts to ensure that indigenous voices are heard loudly and clearly, and that they contributed to local, national and global development processes.

II. UNDP global indigenous peoples programmes and initiatives

5. The UNDP *Human Development Report: Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*[1] (http:hdr.undp.org/en/-) underlines that international cooperation on climate change alone cannot resolve the wider problems driving deforestation and that the world is losing an opportunity to join climate change mitigation agendas with a range of wider human development benefits. Highlights from UNDP programmes having initiatives that work directly with indigenous peoples to positively impact climate change are set out below.

A. UN-REDD Programme

6. The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD Programme) is a collaboration between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme. The UN-REDD Programme is aimed at tipping the economic balance in favour of sustainable management of forests so that their formidable economic, environmental and social goods and services benefit countries, communities and forest users while also contributing to important reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

7. On behalf of the UN-REDD Programme, UNDP has undertaken a number of dialogues and consultations with indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities as part of the design phase. In 2008, UNDP led the following dialogues:

(a) During the sixteenth meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development, UNDP, the Wildlife Conservation Society, USAID, the Leitner Center for International Law and Justice and the Fordham Graduate School of Arts and Sciences hosted the "People and the environment" discussion series on the theme "Carbon markets for climate change, conservation and poverty reduction: opportunities and challenges of reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation";

(b) UNDP continued the dialogue on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation between indigenous and local peoples and climate change policymakers over the course of two events: (i) the Community Dorf, held during the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Bonn in May; and (ii) the Community Poble, World Conservation Congress held in Barcelona, Spain, in October, where representatives of national Governments and leaders of indigenous peoples organizations exchanged perspectives on the issue.

8. Throughout the events, technical and conservation experts, representatives of national Governments, the private sector and United Nations agencies discussed the potential benefits and risks associated with projects for indigenous and local peoples on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. At the events, indigenous and local participants voiced concerns about the initiatives, which are summarized below:

[1] Basingstoke, United Kingdom, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

(a) The need for access to clear, understandable, accurate and current information on proposed UN-REDD Programmes;

(b) The need for written documentation guaranteeing that indigenous and local peoples will benefit from the UN-REDD Programme;

(c) Uncertainty concerning what mechanism will ensure that indigenous and local peoples are incorporated into the UN-REDD Programme project consultation process;

(d) The need to understand/overcome the cultural disconnect experienced by indigenous and local peoples in terms of placing a monetary value on nature;

(e) Fear that including the issue of avoided deforestation in the Clean Development Mechanism would result in further marginalization since the Mechanism has not resulted in substantial partnerships between development banks, the private sector and indigenous and local peoples;

(f) Skepticism over whether a market mechanism can provide sufficient incentive to protect the interests of communities and to conserve biodiversity;

(g) The need to articulate non-market-based mechanisms for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation;

(h) The need for compensation schemes related to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation to allow for "retroactive" benefits for indigenous and local communities that have long been protecting forests.

9. In November 2008, the UN-REDD Programme, in partnership with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Tebtebba Foundation and the traditional knowledge initiative of the United Nations University, hosted the Global Indigenous Peoples Consultation on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, held in Baguio City, Philippines (see http://www.un-redd.net/events/GlobalIndigenousPeoplesConsultationonREDD/tabid/551/Default.aspx). The consultation included representatives of indigenous peoples organizations from 18 countries and representatives of United Nations agencies and resulted in the identification of overarching principles and key recommendations to ensure that UN-REDD Programme initiatives were inclusive and beneficial to indigenous peoples. The consultation participants identified the following overarching principles:

(a) The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and International Labour Organization Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries should guide a human development approach to all activities on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and on indigenous peoples;

(b) Free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples must be ensured for all activities on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation that may impact on traditional livelihoods/territories;

(c) UN-REDD Programme activities must work through legitimate indigenous authorities, institutions and organizations, ensuring the broad representation of indigenous peoples, including women and youth.

10. In addition to the overarching principles, the participants made a number of recommendations for REDD initiatives targeted at national and global activities.

The recommendations can be found in the summary report of the consultation (available from: http://www.unutki.org/downloads/File/Events/Report_Global_IPs_Consultation_REDD_14Nov08_rev1.pdf).

11. The UN-REDD Programme Policy Board will include a high-level indigenous representative. Policy Board members will set the overall direction for the UN-REDD Programme and approve projects for funding through the UN-REDD Programme Fund. UN-REDD Programme has requested the input of an independent civil society advisory group including representatives of indigenous peoples organizations to provide advice and recommendations on the design and implementation of programme activities.

12. The UN-REDD Programme is also developing a set of guidelines for the engagement of indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities, which will be approved in draft form by the UN-REDD Programme Policy Board in March 2009. The guidelines will build on the principles and recommendations made at the Global Indigenous Peoples Consultation on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and will outline the necessary steps that must be taken at the global and national levels to ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples are upheld and respected by UN-REDD Programme activities.

B. Global Environmental Facility

13. The Global Environmental Facility Small Grants Programme, implemented by UNDP on behalf of the GEF partnership in over 115 countries worldwide, supports innovative approaches to reconciling global environmental priorities with development needs. The Programme does this by working directly with communities, providing grants of up to $50,000 to non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations for projects they design themselves. By encouraging community and country ownership of Programme projects and initiatives, the Programme cultivates sustainable approaches and long-term support for its efforts.

14. At least 15 per cent of Programme projects worldwide are implemented by indigenous peoples organizations and/or in indigenous territories and community conserved areas. Indigenous and community conserved areas are natural sites, resources and species habitats conserved in a voluntary and self-directed way by indigenous peoples and local communities throughout the world. This conservation practice, profoundly intertwined with local strategies for livelihoods and with the spiritual and material values of local cultures, is potentially the oldest on earth. Paradoxically, it is also the least understood and recognized, and in extreme jeopardy today. In this regard, urgent attention has been given by the UNDP GEF Small Grants Programme to the development of appropriate participatory mapping techniques (cyber-tracker tools, participatory Geographic Information System, participatory video) for the documentation and protection of the areas through a human development-based approach.

15. During 2008, the GEF Small Grants Programme supported a number of initiatives on indigenous and community conserved areas, in partnership with concerned commissions of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and shared field experiences concerning the areas and community-based adaptation to climate change during international policy forums,

including the second meeting of the ad hoc Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas, held in Rome, in February 2008; a conference on the them "Sustaining cultural and biological diversity in a rapidly changing world: lessons for global policy", held at the American Museum of Natural History, in New York, in April 2008; the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bonn, in May 2008; and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources World Conservation Congress, held in October 2008.

C. Community-based adaptation

16. Climate change will have a strong and disproportionate impact on the lives and livelihoods of indigenous people. Many indigenous people are directly dependent on climate-sensitive natural resources or live in areas that are vulnerable to climate change impacts. In this regard, a UNDP-GEF Community-Based Adaptation project, implemented by the GEF Small Grants Programme delivery modality, was launched in November 2007 to piloting the community component of the GEF strategic priority on adaptation, in order to build the resilience of communities and the ecosystems upon which they rely in the face of climate change impact. Of the 10 pilot country programmes of the UNDP-GEF Community-Based Adaptation project, Guatemala, Bolivia and Viet Nam will focus strongly on projects targeting climate change risk reduction among indigenous communities, as follows (see www.undp-adaptation.org/project/cba):

(a) In Guatemala, community-based adaptation projects are under development in Kiché and Mam communities, focusing on reducing the increasing risks of landslides and soil erosion in the highland agro ecosystems;

(b) In Viet Nam, projects working towards stabilizing water resources for agricultural purposes in Muong communities, which are facing increasingly erratic rainfall and hydrological regimes, are under development;

(c) In Bolivia, project development activities are planned in the predominantly indigenous region surrounding Lake Titicaca, leading to a portfolio of projects focusing on adaptation to increasing aridity and changing hydrology in the Bolivian Altiplano.

17. In partnership with indigenous peoples and the Christensen Fund, the UNDP Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development Programme in Asia and the Pacific is implementing eight projects in Bangladesh, China, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand. The projects will showcase best practices from Asia of how indigenous communities manage natural resources in order to maintain their biocultural diversity and adapt to climate change without losing their culture and identity. The Programme supports projects and partnerships that are innovative, inspirational and linked to bioculturalism and community empowerment.

D. Equator Initiative

18. The Equator Initiative (http://www.undp.org/equatorinitiative) is a partnership between UNDP, civil society, business, Governments and communities to help develop the capacity and raise the profile of grass-roots efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

19. Through the Equator Initiative, UNDP had the opportunity to participate in two events during the seventh session of the Permanent Forum. On 21 April, the UNDP Environment and Energy Group and the GEF/Small Grants Programme hosted the first event, on the theme "Consultation with indigenous and local peoples on climate change and biodiversity conservation". On 25 April, Conservation International, along with the Equator Initiative, the Tribal Link Foundation, the Government of Germany, the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests, and the organization Land is Life, hosted a day-long workshop on the theme "Indigenous and local peoples and climate change: mobilizing collaborative action". During the event, held at the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations, indigenous groups shared their knowledge and voiced their opinions to representatives of national Governments, the private sector, United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations in respect of on-the-ground impacts of climate change and international policy measures responding to climate change.

20. In April, the Equator Initiative hosted a side event panel at the Permanent Forum where the Chairperson of the Forum and Executive Director of Tebtebba Foundation, and UNDP senior advisors and policy specialists spoke about the role of indigenous people in climate change mechanisms and biodiversity conservation efforts. Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and climate change were the main topics of the discussion.

21. At the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Bonn, the Equator Initiative organized the Community Dorf that celebrated the success of local and indigenous groups and included presentations and panels addressing such issues as deforestation. In late 2008 at the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources World Conservation Congress, the Equator Initiative hosted a similar event, the Community Poble. At the Community Poble, knowledge was shared among local and indigenous groups and discussions were held on topics relevant to indigenous peoples, such as community conserved areas, the rights of mobile indigenous peoples and the loss of forests as it relates to the loss of language and culture.

III. UNDP Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development

22. The Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development is part of the regional programming of UNDP carried out through the regional centre in Bangkok. The centre provides advice and technical support to the UNDP country offices within the region, covering 25 countries in Asia and the Pacific. The Initiative offers a neutral space in which Governments, UNDP country offices, agencies and indigenous peoples organizations/civil society organizations can be brought together to discuss and agree on frameworks for cooperation. The Regional

Initiative will continue its work within the context of the UNDP regional cooperation framework for the Asia-Pacific region for 2008-2011.

A. Human development approach and indigenous peoples

23. In 2008, with support from the Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme, the Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development conducted a subregional training workshop in Thailand from 4 to 9 November 2008. The workshop provided participants with skills training in international law, using the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the conceptual framework for guiding application of the human rights and development perspective of indigenous peoples. Guided by a task force of indigenous experts on indigenous issues, the Regional Initiative will develop a manual and toolkit on a human development approach and indigenous peoples. The toolkit will be specifically designed and oriented towards indigenous peoples, often the most vulnerable and marginalized of UNDP target groups.

B. Facilitating dialogue on indigenous peoples issues

1. Interactive Regional Dialogue on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the mechanisms to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples and their relevance in South-East Asia

24. On 28 and 29 January 2009, the UNDP Regional Initiative and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (regional office for South-East Asia) held the first interactive dialogue on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the mechanisms to promote it. The first day was devoted to an interactive dialogue with United Nations resident coordinators/UNDP resident representatives from South-East Asia. A number of issues were identified to ensure that adequate attention was given to indigenous peoples issues in the current work on social inclusion, poverty reduction and Millennium Development Goals tracking; the universal periodic review and treaty bodies; and national efforts in the disaggregation of data.

25. On 22 April 2008, during the seventh session of the Permanent Forum, the UNDP Regional Initiative organized an interactive global dialogue on climate change and the biocultural diversity of indigenous peoples. Indigenous representatives, Governments, members of the Permanent Forum, United Nations agencies and others exchanged ideas on how indigenous peoples have responded to climate change.

26. With support from the Christensen Fund, the UNDP Regional Initiative has been conducting community dialogues in fragile ecosystems in Asia. In 2008, two community dialogues were organized in Sabah, Malaysia, and Ifugao, Cordillera Region, the Philippines. The community dialogue in Sabah, for example, drew out issues, challenges and opportunities regarding preserving the traditional knowledge system, its relation to climate change and the ways in which the community has managed to retain its culture, identity and indigenous knowledge.

2. Awareness-raising and advocacy on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

27. The regional centre in Bangkok has conducted awareness-raising activities on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, with support from the Global Human Rights Strengthening Programme. In the period 2008-2009, in close cooperation with indigenous peoples organizations and partners, the Declaration was translated into Bahasa Indonesia, Khmer, Bengali and Thai. The Regional Initiative will continue the awareness-raising activities on the Declaration and aim to have the Declaration translated into the national languages of Asia.

3. Communication for empowerment of Asia's indigenous peoples

28. UNDP organized an inception planning meeting on "e-Inclusion and media for indigenous peoples" at the e-Bario Knowledge Fair, from 6 to 8 December 2007 in Bario, Malaysia, to conceptualize a new initiative, on communications for empowerment for indigenous peoples within the context of article 16 of the Declaration and focusing on a human development approach. A follow-up workshop in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in July 2008, helped sharpen the focus of the initiative and proposed additional elements.

4. First Asian Indigenous Peoples Fair

29. The first Asian Indigenous Peoples Regional Fair was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, on 26 and 27 July 2008, organized by the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation in partnership with the UNDP Regional Initiative. It brought together indigenous organizations and communities, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, donors and Governments to celebrate the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a symbol of the unity and diversity of indigenous peoples in Asia.

5. Asian Young Leaders in Governance

30. The Asian Young Leaders in Governance is a cross practice initiative conceptualized and implemented in close partnership with the Asia-Pacific Regional Governance Programme, the Capacity 2015 initiative and the Asia-Pacific Gender Mainstreaming Programme, initiated in 2005. It has received a grant from the United Nations Democracy Fund, which will be completed shortly. Asia Young Leaders in Governance has been recognized as a flagship capacity development initiative. The interest and vision of the leadership fellows has prompted UNDP to design a more formal mechanism for supporting innovations for leadership development at the national level. Through a competitive process, five innovative national pilot projects led by the fellows were selected for Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. Future plans include training indigenous leaders and engaging national institutions to ensure greater sustainability at the national level.

C. Indigenous Women

31. In cooperation with the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation and local partners, the UNDP Regional Initiative on Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Development is conducting training programmes for indigenous women on decision-making. The main emphasis of the training is to address the power

dynamics that characterize the daily lives and relationships of indigenous women in their communities. The UNDP Asia-Pacific Gender Mainstreaming Programme also provided critical input to the training and in developing the training manual.

32. The training programmes for indigenous women on decision-making in 2008 were held in Indonesia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, with UNDP country office involvement: the training in Indonesia was held from 24 to 28 August 2008 in Gunung Batu Nausus, Fatukoto Village/Molo, Timur Tengah, Selatan Nusa Tenggara Timur. The local hosts and co-organizers for the programmes included members of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and its network, the Aliansi Masyarakat Adat Nusantara. The training in the Lao People's Democratic Republic was held from 27 to 31 October 2008 in Vientiane and the local hosts and co-organizers included members of the Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and its network, the Gender Development Group and the Community Knowledge Support Association.

IV. Selected country-level initiatives

A. UNDP Bangladesh

33. The Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh is a culturally diverse and physically challenging development arena, with the largest concentration of indigenous peoples in the country. The region is recovering from decades of civil conflict and social segregation. UNDP Bangladesh is addressing that legacy by undertaking a project on promoting development and confidence-building in the Chittagong Hill Tracts through its Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility. The programme is implemented through partnerships with donors, all tiers of Government, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and local communities. Its purpose is to support the Government of Bangladesh, institutions of the Chittagong Hill Tracts and local communities to pursue accelerated, sustainable socio-economic development and poverty reduction based on principles of self-reliance, local participation, decentralized government and sustained peace.

34. The community empowerment component of the project covers 16 Upazilas (subdistricts) in the three hill districts of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, reaching a total of 2,177 communities in 2008. In addition, 450 new community women groups were formed, allowing women to develop and reap the rewards of their own community-based projects. Fifteen local partner non-governmental organizations were engaged in channelling funding and training to small community-led projects. For capacity development, programme implementation committees were formed within decentralized institutions. Logistical assistance was provided to Chittagong Hill Tracts institutions and training was provided to over 1,100 traditional leaders.

35. Confidence-building activities were carried out to raise awareness of indigenous culture and promote peacebuilding. The 2008 indigenous cultural festival in Dhaka attracted over 13,000 visitors. Study tours on the subject of indigenous institutions were arranged to the Philippines and Australia.

36. Under the education component, 90 schools in 15 Upazilas were being refurbished, and school management committees (SMCs) and mothers groups were formed for each of the schools. Teacher training courses were organized and training

manuals for teachers are being developed. Training sessions on child protection and child-friendly schools were organized for teachers. The programme also facilitated the creation of language committees and multilingual teaching and learning materials for 7 of the 10 languages of the Chittagong Hill Tracts, some of which have not previously been recorded in written form. The progress made during 2008 will contribute to the creation of a quality multilingual education system in the Chittagong Hill Tracts to promote and preserve indigenous languages.

37. The health component is expanding its activities through a network of community health-services workers, satellite clinics and mobile health teams. In 2008, a total of 210,615 patients were treated. Due to the effectiveness of the combined strategies of bednet distribution and on-the-spot diagnosis and treatment of malaria cases, malaria deaths decreased in 2008, and 15,105 cases of malaria were diagnosed and treated effectively.

38. Gender mainstreaming is a key crosscutting activity for the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility. Capacity-building training programmes were organized for indigenous women leaders, together with training-of-trainers exercises. A grass-roots indigenous women leader's network was formed to link marginalized indigenous women with each other and with their communities, with indigenous peoples organizations and local government advocates. Formation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Women Organizations Network was also facilitated through the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility. Each year, the Facility provides administrative support and facilitates the selection process of 20 indigenous students for study in various Australian universities funded by AusAID. To date the Facility has provided support to a total of 60 such scholars.

B. UNDP Bolivia

39. In Bolivia, the United Nations system established an Inter-Agency Working Group on Intercultural Issues and an Indigenous Peoples Advisory Council to the United Nations country team. The Advisory Council, created in December 2006, has facilitated the organization of consultations between indigenous peoples representatives and representatives of United Nations organizations and bodies, including the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food. As part of its collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNDP Bolivia also provided financial support to representatives of indigenous peoples organizations to strengthen their participation in the sessions of the Permanent Forum and other international forums.

C. UNDP Burundi

40. UNDP Burundi has supported the Associations of Batwas in developing a microfinancing and small and medium-sized enterprise project. The initiative is part of a peacebuilding programme aimed at building long-term peace after 30 years of civil war. The Akeza Association is one of the organizations that has worked with UNDP. Its primary goal has been to assist communities in capacity-building by developing income-generating projects, in particular pottery, and by providing business management training in such areas as exporting.

D. UNDP China

41. In partnership with the Government, UNDP China has been implementing the following three projects with the aim of facilitating local economic and social development for ethnic minorities in China:

1. Project on poverty reduction for ethnic minorities (2006-2010)

42. China has made important achievements in poverty reduction since beginning its economic reforms, in 1978. The number of poor people living on less than $1 per day fell from 490 million to 88 million between 1990 and 2002. While that success has lifted millions of ethnic minorities out of poverty, in comparison with other more advanced groups and areas, ethnic minorities are still lagging behind.

43. The project seeks to improve human development outcomes among targeted ethnic groups through strengthening institutional support mechanisms and community responses. It applies a comprehensive approach that: (a) helps to develop and strengthen leadership for managing and coordinating needs-based poverty reduction from the provincial/regional level to the county level; (b) supports working capacities, from the county level to the community level, for targeted poverty alleviation interventions; and (c) develops the necessary supportive institutional structures for the managed growth of tourism and cultural industries for poverty reduction based on cultural and natural assets.

2. Tibet development and poverty alleviation programme (2006-2010)

44. Development indicators in Tibet continue to rise steadily as the economy grows and average incomes rise. However, the region still lags clearly behind other areas of China in terms of human development. The programme aims to simultaneously reduce poverty and protect traditional cultural expressions by leveraging cultural resources to develop livelihoods.

3. Culture-based development for ethnic minorities (2008-2011)

45. The constitution of China guarantees that all ethnic minorities, in addition to having equal political and economic rights, have freedom of religious belief, the right to use and develop their own spoken and written languages and the freedom to preserve, or change, their cultural traditions and customs. The rights were recently recognized in the Law on Regional National Autonomy (2001) and in the eleventh five-year plan on the development of public affairs for ethnic minorities, which forms part of China's eleventh five-year plan (2007).

46. China is working with the United Nations to ensure a diverse, cross-sectoral range of international advice and expertise to enable it "to move to an increasingly human development-based approach to development for minorities. Eight United Nations agencies[2] have been working together under the United Nations-China Culture and Development Partnership Framework funded by the UNDP-Government of Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund. The Framework

[2] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Industrial Development Organization and World Health Organization.

recognizes the need to reach China's ethnic minorities in culturally sensitive and appropriate ways, where cultural diversity is acknowledged as part of the common heritage of humanity, as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature.

E. UNDP Colombia

47. UNDP Colombia provided support to the Government and indigenous peoples organizations to find consensus around a proposal to develop a public policy on indigenous peoples issues, with an ethnic approach, which was included in the national development plan 2006-2010.

48. In the context of a solution for the integral reparation of the Nasa indigenous peoples, UNDP has provided support to the parties to find opportunities for dialogue. UNDP has also provided technical assistance to acquire land and has provided opportunities for consensus in communities. During 2007 and 2008, the State purchased approximately 4,100 hectares of land as reparation and provided inputs for the development of a life plan. Although the agreed reparation has not yet been achieved, the progress made so far in the process is regarded as historic.

49. During the peasant mobilizations of 2008 ("Minga"), which included social sectors such as peasants and afro-descendants, UNDP, at the request of the Government and the communities, accompanied the process and promoted dialogue and consensus, with a view to reaching agreements and avoiding confrontations between communities and State forces. It was possible to define thematic lines and have political dialogue at a high level to jointly identify solutions.

50. UNDP, in coordination with other United Nations agencies, has been providing technical assistance and follow-up to strengthen the organizational capacity of indigenous communities in situations of vulnerability, in respect of their physical and cultural integrity, taking also into consideration the health, nutrition or physical security of communities that are at risk due to armed conflict, including in Narino, Choco, Sucre, Meta and Sierra Nevada of Santa Marta.

51. UNDP has also provided support to various indigenous communities in the Amazon with a view to strengthening traditions and productive processes and the management of natural resources under customary schemes. In parallel, UNDP has provided support to build mechanisms of exchange with civil society, as in the case of the Nasa, by promoting an indigenous local development agency.

52. UNDP has been able to mainstream indigenous peoples issues in various programmes, especially in such topics as reconciliation and peacebuilding and the governance and monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals. Indigenous peoples organizations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and United Nations agencies (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNDP) have built a broad framework for coordination and articulation of work and priorities for intervention in indigenous land. Together with other State entities, United Nations agencies and indigenous peoples organizations, UNDP will support the development of a plan of integral services to the Nukak Maku people, a nomadic ethnic group considered to be at risk of extinction.

F. UNDP Ecuador

53. UNDP Ecuador is part of the United Nations Inter-Agency Technical Group on Intercultural Issues. The Group will implement, over the next three years, a joint project on development, cultural diversity for poverty reduction and social inclusion, funded by the UNDP-Government of Spain Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, as part of its window on culture and development. The project will mainly support public policies aimed at the development of indigenous peoples and afro-descendants in Ecuador.

54. In 2008, and in the context of the constitutional process, UNDP facilitated the visit of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, who met with Constitutional Assembly members and representatives of indigenous peoples. The Special Rapporteur issued recommendations pertaining to the rights of indigenous peoples as they relate to the constitutional process. Ecuador also received the visit of the United Nations independent expert on human rights and extreme poverty. UNDP facilitated meetings with indigenous representatives and communities.

55. UNDP supported the production of several publications including the dissemination of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (in Kichwa and Spanish) and the articles of the new Constitution of Ecuador that refer to indigenous peoples.

G. UNDP Kenya

56. UNDP Kenya contributed to the establishment of an indigenous peoples advisory committee. The committee provided support for the visit to Kenya in 2006 of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people. The selection of a committee representative as a member of the national steering committee of the GEF Small Grants Programme in Kenya strengthens efforts to build linkages among various ongoing projects.

57. The implementation of "Assisting communities together", a global programme headquartered in Kenya, has been of particular success and has set the basis for the recently launched Civil Society Democratic Governance Facility. The Facility will support, among others, community-based organizations, including indigenous peoples organizations, with grants to strengthen their capacity to deepen democracy through improved internal good governance against established benchmarks. The Facility is funded through a multi-donor basket fund, with an initial support of $4 million.

H. UNDP India[3]

58. UNDP India supports a number of projects located in indigenous/tribal areas. A recently completed project, on strengthening sustainable livelihoods for biodiversity conservation in Sundarbans, focused on sustainable development and

[3] More information on UNDP India is available from www.undp.org.in, including the following reports: "Land rights and ownership in Orissa"; "Paharias: the struggle of a tribe for recognition"; and "Enclosing forests: towards protection of habitat".

biodiversity conservation for the Sundarbans ecosystem. A related project, on conservation and sustainable use of the Gulf of Mannar biosphere reserve's coastal biodiversity, aims to demonstrate the modalities for integrating biodiversity conservation, sustainable coastal zone management and the livelihoods of local communities, including indigenous/tribal peoples. In addition, UNDP India is participating in a joint United Nations project to contribute to the national response in reducing the risk and impact of HIV/AIDS in four North-East States, including Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram and Meghalaya, which are home to a large number of indigenous/tribal peoples.

I. UNDP Indonesia

59. UNDP is supporting the local government of Papua in meeting one of the demands specified by the Special Autonomy Law on Papua as well as the people's demand to legalize Adat courts. The initiative seeks to promote the establishment of a special local regulation (PERDASUS) that will enable the use of Adat courts as a formal dispute resolution measure. The initiative includes the strengthening of the Adat courts in five selected districts in Papua and West Papua provinces; and advocacy and coordination among the provincial prosecution office and other institutions. As a result, in December 2008 the provincial parliament legitimized the draft of PERDASUS as a local regulation that enables Adat courts to be used as a formal forum for dispute resolution.

60. Together with the International Labour Organization, UNDP Indonesia launched the livelihood strengthening programme for indigenous people in Papua and West Papua, ensuring that indigenous people living in poverty could improve their entrepreneurial skills and thereby have better access to markets and gain economic returns from their resources.

61. Through the GEF-Small Grants Programme, UNDP provided, among others, support to the Orang Rimba indigenous people of Makekal Hulu, Jambi, and the Toro indigenous people of Kulawi, to implement collaborative management agreements with the national park authorities in the protected forest areas in Bukit Duabelas, Jambi Province, Lore Lindu and Central Sulawesi Province. The work of those communities now serves as a model for other communities seeking collaborative management agreements with Government authorities in other provinces of the country.

J. UNDP Mexico

62. In 2008, UNDP carried out activities in the context of two different projects focused on indigenous peoples. The first project entitled "Indigenous peoples in Mexico: towards a culture of information" aimed to promote a culture of information and ethnic and cultural diversity in Mexico. It focused on awareness-raising and providing support to the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples. In this context, several activities were undertaken to launch a website with resources and information (see www.cdi.gob.mx/pnud/).

63. In addition, a national study on indigenous peoples was published in Spanish. The study emphasizes the human development paradigm in order to shed light on challenges pertaining to Mexican society and constitutes the platform for a series of

publications on indigenous peoples in contemporary Mexico. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was also translated into 11 indigenous languages and two versions, with audio, were issued in the Maya and the Mexicano de la Huasteca Hidalguense languages (see www.cinu.org.mx/especiales/2008/pueblosindigenas/index.html).

64. The National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples agreed to produce a second human development report with data from 2000 and 2005. The theme of the report is the distribution of public expenditure on indigenous peoples. It is expected that the report will be issued in August 2009. The project has already made progress in the study of the concept of development from the perspective of indigenous peoples.

65. The second project, entitled "Strengthening the democratic culture in the electoral indigenous districts in Mexico", aimed to follow up the actions initiated by the Federal Electoral Institute in collaboration with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples to establish 29 uninominal electoral districts wherein 40 per cent or more of the population comprised indigenous peoples. The establishment of such districts aims at increasing indigenous peoples representation in Congress.

66. Over the past two years, UNDP has been working with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples towards implementing an initiative to disseminate information on indigenous peoples for the purpose of decision-making. The initiative had a budget of $398,000 in 2007 and $486,000 in 2008. In 2007, UNDP Mexico carried out an assessment of indigenous women's political participation. As a result, UNDP will implement a capacity development process in 2008 to create better conditions for indigenous women to effectively exercise their local authority duties. UNDP will implement a project on electoral rights and political participation of indigenous peoples that counts on the contribution of governmental and academic partners ($422,000).

67. UNDP Mexico received $70,000 from the UNDP Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund to carry out the project entitled "Empowering indigenous peoples for local development", which aims to promote accountability in local governments by increasing the capacity of indigenous communities to monitor the work of public institutions and their representatives.

K. UNDP Namibia

68. There are about 100,000 San minorities in Namibia. The San have been continually pushed off their land and currently only about 15 per cent retain their land rights. Life expectancy among the San population is 22 per cent lower than the national average and only 20 per cent are literate. The San, as a minority group, are one of the most disadvantaged communities in Namibia and are often regarded as the most dispossessed and marginalized. Within the group, women and girls are even more vulnerable, making them the most disadvantaged group in Namibian society.

69. UNDP is supporting the Government of Namibia to enhance legal protection of the San communities and their access to basic social services. The marginalization of San communities often causes them to have no knowledge of their rights or of

how to assert them. The overall objective of the programme is to ensure that while San communities, especially San women and girls, become aware of the existence of services available to them (e.g., protection against gender-based violence, reproductive health and access to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS), they will also have access to livelihoods and increased incomes to mitigate their low status and vulnerability in society. As the targeted beneficiaries of the programme, San women and girls will be involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of different activities.

70. The programme works to raise the awareness and understanding of leaders, the media and the general population on the rights of San communities and their contributions to development. Activities, including the training of key personnel in the provision of services to San women and girls, such as prevention, protection and reporting of gender-based violence, will be undertaken. Additionally, activities that deal, in part, with the economics of the gender problems at the community and individual levels will be implemented in the next three years (2009-2011) as part of the United Nations Joint Gender and Development Programme on the theme "Setting things right: towards gender equality and equity".

L. UNDP Philippines

71. Support to indigenous peoples is one of the key priorities under the Government of the Philippines/UNDP country programme action plan 2005-2009. At least three of the programme portfolios have supported local-level initiatives that seek to empower indigenous communities in different parts of the country. At the regional level, UNDP has established a regional indigenous peoples programme to complement efforts at the country level. During a recent meeting of the Outcome Board, there was a consensus to give particular attention to the concerns of the country's indigenous peoples in a more comprehensive manner. It was observed that the numerous efforts of UNDP in the country were sporadic and lacked a common development framework that rationalized UNDP interventions in respect of the issues and concerns of indigenous Filipino communities. With the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly, efforts to operationalize its provisions through a more integrated programme on indigenous peoples is imperative, as well as being a challenge to the country office.

72. UNDP Philippines carried out an indicative map of UNDP-assisted projects on indigenous peoples in the Philippines that provides a staging platform from which to formulate an integrated programme on the country's indigenous peoples. The mapping exercise indicates that there are approximately 35 new and ongoing projects, amounting to approximately $1,421,000.

M. UNDP Russian Federation

73. As in previous years, the Governance and Environment Units of UNDP in the Russian Federation have contributed to the Russian-speaking component of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Indigenous Fellowship Programme. A number of UNDP environmental projects include a component related to indigenous peoples. For instance, the project "Demonstrating

sustainable conservation of biological diversity in four protected areas in the Russian Federation's Kamchatka Peninsula, phases I and II" resulted in (a) draft provisions on public councils and local self-governance; and (b) protection of the Bystrinsk and Nalychevo natural parks with the use of traditional environmental knowledge of the indigenous peoples in the north.

N. UNDP Thailand

74. UNDP Thailand continued to strengthen its programmes for indigenous and highland ethnic peoples in the country. The activities included successful completion of programmes and the launch of a new integrated community development programme.

1. Promotion and protection of the human rights of the highland ethnic peoples in Thailand

75. The overall objective of the project was to advocate for and strengthen networks of highland ethnic peoples. This was achieved by setting up: a documentation centre on human rights, including a website; a training programme on human rights for selected ethnic leaders; protection mechanisms for ethnic peoples by providing legal assistance and paralegal training; and networking activities with civil society organizations, concerned Government departments and related international institutions.

2. Integrated community development programme in Mae Hong Son Province

76. UNDP Thailand launched a new project in 2008 in the remote highland province of Mae Hong Son in Northern Thailand to specifically improve the lives of vulnerable women and men, a majority of whom belong to indigenous and highland ethnic peoples. The new initiative is also aligned to the strategic direction provided by the Government of Thailand, which sets out, as a key priority, the challenge of addressing the disparities of opportunities and outcomes among specific geographic areas and/or population groups in Thailand.

77. UNDP, in partnership with the Mae Hong Son provincial government and other local beneficiaries, is aiming to improve the situation by promoting fair and equal treatment and access to resources and services among the different communities residing in the Province, as well as by promoting the sustainable use of existing resources, with special attention given to women and children, who make up the majority of the population in the Province.

78. The project has three interrelated components focusing on: enhancing food security and increasing agricultural and non-agricultural income generation opportunities; developing an inclusive and responsive public service to improve service delivery; and developing management and technical skills for natural disaster risk management and environmental activities, including environmentally friendly enterprises. To achieve the objectives the project strategy focuses on livelihoods generation, the capacity development of local governments, and natural resource management. The project will also develop a communications strategy that will use community radio and radio drama in hill tribe languages on issues as diverse as sustainable natural resources management, access to public services and agriculture prices.

V. Final remarks

79. Over the years, UNDP has been working with indigenous peoples in the implementation of various projects and initiatives at the local, regional and national levels. Based on this joint learning process, UNDP is committed to systematizing those experiences and providing support to Governments, indigenous peoples and other actors towards the effective implementation of the international legal principles recognized in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

80. UNDP acknowledges the importance of strengthening its own internal capacities to respond better to current opportunities and challenges. In follow-up to the recommendation contained in the report of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on its seventh session, in 2008 (see E/2008/43, para. 67), it has established an internal liaison committee that is tasked with internal coordination and with promoting partnerships with indigenous peoples. UNDP firmly believes that indigenous peoples are uniquely positioned to demonstrate in practice the essence of the human development paradigm, the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and the linkage between peace, human rights and human development. In facing such current challenges as the food and financial crisis, climate change and the proliferation of localized violent conflicts, the vision and leadership of indigenous peoples are urgently needed at the global level as they can propose new ideas and innovative solutions.

81. The UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011, and the new civil society strategy on the theme "Voice and accountability for human development: a UNDP global strategy to strengthen civil society and civic engagement" provide a clear framework for action and for the important role that UNDP will play in supporting efforts to ensure that indigenous voices are heard loudly and clearly and that they contribute to local, national and global development processes.